

# Wine Spectator

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## What's in a Package?

*Apparently a lot of wineries find bottles boring these days. What was once an occasional trickle of alternative wine packaging has become a torrent in recent years. Two factors are behind the flood: an effort to be more green (the new packages tend to be lighter, requiring less fuel to transport them) and the willingness of consumers to accept new packaging. Here are some of the most interesting examples:*

### WINE-IN-A-BAG-IN-A-BOX-IN-A-BARREL

Sonoma winery DeLoach Vineyards is pouring Pinot Noir into 10-liter biodegradable eco-bags, which are packed inside small recyclable boxes shipped directly to restaurants, where they're placed inside oak mini-barrels. Both the bags and boxes are made from recyclable materials, and the barrels are designed to be refilled. DeLoach claims that as the bag collapses, the wine is kept fresh for up to eight weeks. Not to be left out, Oregon's Wooldridge Creek Winery is putting 20 percent of its wine in kegs.



container features a dot on the label that changes color when the wine is chilled to the proper temperature. (Aluminum reportedly chills wine five times faster than glass.) Volute, a small San Francisco-area based négociant, sells Bordeaux AOC red, white and rosé wines in 187ml aluminum bottles.

### JUICED BOX

Wine in a Tetra Pak carton is a juice box gone uptown. The containers seal out sunlight, eliminate the risk of cork taint, and are lighter. Three Thieves Bandit Cabernet was the first domestic wine "bottled" this way (they also make Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay, Merlot and Sangria), and Boisset has grabbed attention with its

French Rabbit line. The jury is still out, however, on how green the Tetra Pak carton is. Because it consists of three layers (plastic, paper and aluminum), some environmentalists complain it can be more expensive to recycle.

### ONE WORD: PLASTIC

Some plastic bottle are made from polyethylene terephthalate (PET), a polymer resin related to polyester. The bottles have a lighter carbon footprint because of reduced weight and production energy needs. Yellow Jersey (again, from Boisset) features Pinot Noir and Sauvignon Blanc from France's Pays d'Oc. Outdoor clothing manufacturer Patagonia uses recycled PET bottles in many of its products. The bottle you open today could be your fleece jacket or polyester sleeping bag tomorrow.

—Lynn Alley

### CANNED WINE

A wine-filled aluminum can is shatterproof, lightweight, more easily recycled than glass, and impermeable to UV rays—but it's not really new. In 1936, just after the first beer turned up in a can, Acampa Winery in Lodi produced a canned California Muscatel. But until recently, canned wine was considered déclassé. Coppola Winery's Sofia Mini Blanc de Blancs (in a shocking pink can complete with a straw) redefines the image.



### ALUMINUM BOTTLE

Boisset, which also owns DeLoach (and seems to have a thing for alternative packaging), has released Mommessin Beaujolais Grande Reserve in 750ml aluminum wine bottles. The



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